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MEMORANDUM

Date: April 1, 2006
To: Parks and Recreation Department Commissioners
From: William C. Scalzo, Director *WCS*
Re: **Director's Summary of Current Events**

Listed below are issues that the department has been involved with since the February 14th, 2006 Director's Summary.

Oglebay

The Oglebay Revenue and Management School was held in Wheeling, WV March 12th to 16th, 2006. Over 90 students were in attendance from twelve states. Three students from our department attended, with one on a scholarship. Instructors come from all over the parks and recreation field to teach at this school. It provides detailed training in the revenue development, contract management and contract negotiations. This school is the oldest continuing operation of a revenue institute in the U.S. and is now in its 41st year.

Budget and Marketing

We are drawing to a close on our budget negotiations and have reached some agreement on the recommended budget. The Office of Management & Budget (OMB) has worked closely with us on our targets and our one-time requests. We were granted all one-time fund balance uses that we asked for, including the continuation of development money at Spur Cross, as well as a solar oasis project there. The Enhancement fund will be paying for an out-sourced fee study as well as a new general population survey. It will also be purchasing a significant piece of equipment for the planning and design staff.

We continue to strive to meet the growing costs of health and dental premiums for our current employees and to fund respectable merit increases. A number of market studies are underway, which will further impact the FY07 budget. OMB has agreed to add an electrician position in FY07, and there is some consensus that a mid-year request for an additional position for the Trails team may be considered.

Superintendent Report

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area (SCRCA): The Sonoran Arts League has completed a community service project on the SCRCA; to paint a large desert mural in order to reduce the visual intrusion created by our field office-storage trailer. The project turned out to be a first class effort and many positive comments are being received via our visitors.

Supervisor John Gunn continues to coordinate with staff of the Tonto National Forest to tap into their expertise on how to deal with a significant noxious weed infestation (Star Thistle) that is occurring on the Conservation Area. John is hopeful the forest, the county, and ASU will partner in the treatment and assessment of the methods used in combating this menace. Kevin Smith, Interpretive Ranger is meanwhile working on rounding up a volunteer group to help prepare the site for treatment.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: The Bald Eagle closure will end on March 31, 2006 and the area will re-open at this time. AZ Game and Fish has determined an unsuccessful breeding year. The pair of Bald Eagles at Lake Pleasant did not lay eggs, even though normal courtship and nest-building activities were observed. AZ. Game and Fish is unsure of the exact reason why these eagles did not reproduce this year. They had been portraying all the behaviors of a pair that was ready to reproduce.

The second annual Lake Pleasant Dam, Good, Walk, Hike will be held on April 1, 2006, from 9:00 - 12:00. We had 82 participants last year and we anticipate 100-150 this year. Sponsors for the event, Albertsons and Safeway, have donated fresh produce (bananas and oranges). Sportsman's warehouse has donated (4) 25.00 gift cards. CAP has donated (6) cases of water.

The fifth annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held at the Roadrunner Playground on April 16, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. This has been a very successful event in the years past. At last year's event we had 300 children and the Easter Bunny.

The National Association of Interpretation Workshop is being held April 3 - 7, 2006 in Phoenix. The workshop is designed to develop plans in enhancing Visitor Center facilities as well as identifying ways in developing a theme for interpretive displays. The students will attend a site visit on Monday, April 3, 2006. Park staff will give an overview of the operations of the Park as well as future plans of enhancing the Visitor Center appearance and operation. Students will have the opportunity to individually visit the facility through the week while they are developing their plans.

The Bureau of Land Management, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, Bradshaw Coalition and State Land have scheduled a site visit at Table Mesa on April 7, 2006. The purpose is to briefly review the past successes / accomplishments and on-site evaluation to discuss continual shooting issues and OHV traffic. A kiosk is planned to be installed on the Bureau of Land Management property to provide individuals accessing this area with information on responsible recreation for these and other public lands in Arizona.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park: Attendance has picked up dramatically. The two weeks after the rains on the weekend of March 11 and 12, 2006 have seen a 23% increase in attendance compared to the two weeks before the rains.

The White Tank Park Visitor Center received a face lift on March 25, 2006. Staff working with an Eagle Scout and his troop, painted the Visitor Center from top to bottom.

In the last 2 years 80% of the buildings in the park have been completely re-painted, many inside and outside, top to bottom. The Restrooms at area 4 and 6 are moving forward. Metal roof beams are going in place on April 1, 2006. White Tank Park is having a major addition to a 2.5 year Border and Property Protection Program. On Tuesday, March 28, 2006 the Fence Building Company placed the first set of fence posts on the North Border.

There will be a park clean up day on the north border of the park on April 29, 2006.

Desert Outdoor Center: S.O.L.I.D. USA, Inc, the contractor selected by APS to install the Solar Thermal HVAC system. They have delivered all the materials to the DOC, poured the foundation for the solar panel array, constructed the metal framework for the array, identified hook-ups for electrical and computer remote monitoring / control of the system, and is preparing to install the panels. They have been very cooperative in striving to enable interpretation of this technology by configuring the system in a manner that will lend itself to teaching the public about solar thermal technology. A glass side to the energy cabin will allow a view of the internal workings of the system, and an educational sign provided by APS will facilitate passive education opportunities for visitors to the DOC. A dedication of this system is scheduled for April 18, 2006 from 10:00 a.m. until noon, and is hosted by APS. Additional signage at the DOC funded by APS includes interpretive panels at the ball court near the entrance, at the new ethno botany garden, and off the front patio explaining APS's Wildlife Protection Program. A presentation on this system will be presented to the Parks Commission at the May 9, 2006 meeting held at the DOC, tours will also be provided.

Southcoast Dock in San Diego was awarded the bid to provide materials and assistance in constructing a boat dock in Honeymoon Cove. This structure will be the centerpiece for the DOC's Aquatics Education Program. Construction of the anchorage system to draw the dock into deeper water as lake elevations fluctuate will occur in late April, and

arrival / assembly of the dock in the first part of May. Boy Scouts summer camp will be two months this summer, in June and July. In 2005, 232 scouts earned over 1,000 merit badges in courses like sailing, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, fly fishing, skiing, rowing and motor boating.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park: A busy March for day use with more than 1,600 daily visitors, this is more than March of 2005. With daily use busy, camping was down with fewer days in overflow and general daily numbers down from last year.

On March 24 - 26, 2006, the NOVA Desert Classic was held and was not part of the national championship series this year so the number of teams did not match last year. None the less, the race attracted 35 male and 10-15 female professional racers. The race director estimated that only 20% of the racers came from Arizona. So, the sponsorship and relationship established with the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce to offer discount rooms, and discounts on rented equipment did payoff and will be even more critical next year when it is expected to return as a national series event.

The goodwill established with the many visitors in the park who have stopped by and commented on the Visitor Center was gratifying. The new center gives the staff and volunteers a presence in the park that was never seen previously. The information dispensed and souvenir sales combined help bond the park with its visitors.

Usery Mountain Regional Park: It had a busy March in many regards despite not having a wildflower in sight. The park had 22, 400 visitors and has sold 473 annual passes year to date which is up by 45 passes from last year. On one Sunday alone 103 annual pass users visited Usery Park for day-use. Day-use was up, but due to fuel prices camping use was down this season and our campers have been more active in our interpretive rangers programs this season. The ranger started doing a few programs in the campground during the week in the mornings that have been popular and those programs also spurred folks coming out to programs in the park.

The Fitness Challenge Series of 6 hikes have been very popular resulting in incredible stories of changes in health recovering and newspaper reporters actually want to write about them!

The Cowboy Campfire programs have been hot, so to speak; Longtree Austin, one of our hosts is a very talented writer/poet/singer from New Mexico and his evening programs have been bringing in up to 100 people.

We have started a monthly hike for seniors and also did a wildflower-less hike this month and yes, we had hikers for that.

The ranger and supervisor had a very successful meeting with John Stanley of the Arizona Republic about how he could serve the park system better as a reporter.

We are looking forward to our new special event in April on Earth Day, the "Hike-A-Thon". Smokey the Bear and Woodsy Owl will be around for kids' fun on Merkle Trail, as well as other distinguished guests yet to be disclosed.

Usery Park started the month off with a bang by hosting the East Valley Wildland Fire Drill, in which 23 agencies, 250 firefighters, 40 fire trucks, and 3 helicopters practiced as if there was a fire in the park by setting up an incident command post, water dip site, portable tank and drafting site, structure foaming and communication station, and a progressive hose lay and shelter deployment station. The day was packed with action with the helicopters flying over the park dumping water, fire trucks in and out, the public visiting and school busses coming in. Park volunteers were staged at different places telling visitors what was going on. Mesa Fire Dept. had given out brochures a week prior to neighbors along the park boundaries. This received media attention by Channels 5, 10 and 12 as well as, by the AZ Republic and the Tribune. On March 21st the park supervisor and Jeff Clark from Rural Metro Fire taped a 30-minute TV Chat show with Chairman Stapley for Channel 11 to be edited with action-packed footage that was filmed by a county photographer the day of the event. The show will air sometime in April. This was a great day to witness and be a partner in 23 governmental agencies participating together. Not one had all the resources alone, combined they had all the resources, and coordinated together in these economic times to make it work! The park supervisor invites everyone to not miss this exciting event next year!

We are moving on the Wildlife Viewing Pond Grant, we have finally received the cultural clearance and will be starting on the construction of that grant project. The supervisor and engineering department are working with MCDOT on

revamping the parking at the Wind Cave trailhead. It will become a one-way road with parallel parking thus significantly increasing parking.

The supervisor is also working with engineering on a pilot program for tent camping in the family campground.

The new, soon-to-be water line coming off of Ranger Rider Trail from the City of Mesa on the west side of the park has been flagged and mapped. This means that we will be able to abandon the Meridian Line and the 3 miles of desert water pipe line.

The new tractor, "Big Blue" has arrived; training took place on March 30, 2006 for maintenance staff and 7 Crew.

Maricopa Trail

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has approved the right of way application fee for the Arizona State Land Department for Segments 16 and 18 connecting Anthem to Cave Creek Regional Park and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

The engineering group at Parks has completed the consultant services short-list for the request for proposal and interview process for the proposed Visitor Center and Amphitheater prototype design projects.

Jeff Sargent/City of Peoria has commenced the intergovernmental agreement process with Parks that will allow the Maricopa Trail Segment 12 to be built on the Agua Fria between Happy Valley Parkway and Lake Pleasant.

Rick Mellegard/Bureau of Reclamation has recommended for approval the Segment 13 alignment below and east of the Dam at Lake Pleasant; Jim Sweeney/Maricopa Water District has approved the same proposal allowing use/crossing of their Beardsley Canal bridge; Tom Fitzgerald/Central Arizona Project has approved the alignment that passes just north of the CAP siphon; Nichole Olsker/BOR has approved the Morgan City Wash (encompasses the endangered species Southwestern Willow Flycatcher habitat) trail spur alignment connection to the Lake Pleasant Overlook.

Doug Porter/Growth Management Institute, Washington D.C., has received Parks input and consultation on the update for the 1996 Maricopa Area Government Desert Spaces Plan.

Jim Burke/City of Phoenix has assembled the staff necessary to begin the intergovernmental agreement process with Parks to formalize the Segment 7 alignment on the west and east ends of South Mountain Park to include the National Trail.

John Rose/Maricopa County Department of Transportation has survey staked Segment 10 for construction and the stakes have gone missing for the second time.

Jim Duncan/Salt River Project has confirmed the current license status of Sun Circle Trail Segment 2 Arizona Canal, Segment 3 and 4 South Canal, Segment 5 Consolidated Canal and Segment 6 Western Canal and provided the application for the proposed trail signage; SRP has agreed to prepare the necessary graphic design of the Maricopa and Sun Circle trail signs.

Dennis Smith/Northwest Woodland Services, Inc. has provided Parks with information on the current trends and costs of trail construction on projects for Scott Hamilton/City of Scottsdale and Tim Barnard/City of Mesa.

Marc Lange/Vollmer & Associates provided the proposed Anthem Trailhead preliminary conceptual design that will be located just north of the Fire Station on Desert Hills Drive on a 2.5 acre site.

Kristen Mohamed participated in the Project Aesthetics Advisory Committee meeting for the Flood Control District Sun Valley Area Drainage Master Plan. Arizona Department of Transportation has commenced the State Route 303L Utility Design Concept Report on the area from Happy Valley Road to I-17 with stakeholders input.

Bob Gasser/ADOT has confirmed consultant Denis Coroner/Aztec Engineering is working with the ADOT bridge group, with the first stakeholder meeting scheduled for April and a projected early October completion of the Project Assessment Document.

Brian McCabe/Planning and Development completed the McMicken Dam Scenic Corridor 2020 Eye to the Future Draft which includes designation as a segment of the Maricopa Trail.

The engineering group at Parks has solicited Trail Design Consulting Services from County registered landscape architects and civil engineers with a due date of April 6, 2006, using the Questionnaire for Consultant Services process.

Contract Updates

Lake Pleasant Regional Park: At present, the judge has dismissed the case by Pensus Group regarding construction of the new marina. Discussions continue with the City of Peoria as they claim rezoning is required in order to build the Marina. The Agreement remains in draft re: the Bureau of Reclamation to convey oversight requirements of an additional parcel of land not included in the original land assignment. The parcel is desired for Third Party development of facilities that will enhance and/or support the recreational activities available at Lake Pleasant Regional Park.

Installation continues on the Solar HVAC at the Desert Outdoor Center. APS dedication is scheduled for April 18, 2006; a public Open House is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on April 22, 2006. To recap, S.O.L.I.D. USA, Inc., the vendor, desires this project to be the "show case" for alternative energy to be used for heating and cooling. APS purchased the System in exchange for the "green credits"; Parks will acquire the System at no cost; Maintenance contracts and support packages remain to be negotiated.

Adobe Dam Regional Park: The draft solicitation for additional concessionaires at Adobe Dam continues to be staffed. The desire is to attract concessionaires that will bring additional revenue to Parks; however, non-profit concessionaires will not be excluded from submitting a proposal. A release date of the solicitation has not been determined.

An assignment of Victory Lane Sports Complex is being discussed.

Discussions continue between Parks and Waterworld Safari. Progress continues to the point that it appears there will be no lawsuit. A new solicitation is being drafted with a tentative release date of late 2006-early 2007. It appears there has been mutual acceptance of the existing agreement with Golfland Enterprises, Inc. ending on October 1, 2008.

Discussions have started with Flood Control District to amend the 1981 Agreement to correct statutory deficiencies and to update the existing Agreement.

Paradise Valley: The last five (5) - year renewal option has become effective regarding Paradise Valley Golf Course.

The five (5) year renewal option has been completed with Crown Castle International re: the Paradise Valley Monopole Agreement. The purpose of early extension was to enable them to assign an additional tenant.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area: 6-L Ranch discussions continue to manage the land adjacent to Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. Parks has an interest in protecting the archeological resources and integrity of the 6-L Ranch to ensure public availability for interpretation and educational purposes.

Usery Regional Park: A new agreement re: management of trails jointly shared by Usery Regional Park and Tonto National Forest is being finalized. by Tonto National Forest. The previous Agreement expired Dec. 31, 2005.

Construction/Design Projects

Buckeye Hills Regional Park Public Shooting Range: A coordination meeting occurred on March 8, 2006, with other county departments, such as Facilities, Sheriff, Real Estate, and Legal.

Buckeye Hills Regional Park Master Plan: The preplanning has been cancelled due to the uncertainty of the park, based on the potential impact of two proposed shooting facilities.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park Irrigation System Improvements: J2 Engineering and Environmental Design have completed 90% plans and bid opening is scheduled for May 9, 2006.

Restroom Improvements 2005: The walls at each site are being erected, and so is the steel roof framing. The completion date of all the structures is June 30, 2006.

Entry Station Improvements 2006: The bid opening is planned for late May 2006.

Fencing at San Tan and White Tank Regional Mountain Parks: The construction notice to proceed was issued to Security Fence of Arizona and construction has started at White Tank then the contractor will proceed to San Tan.

Usery Mountain Regional Park Water System Improvements: A pressure and flow test is planned for early April 2006.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park RV Dump Station Construction: Due to bids exceeding the limit, this project has been dropped.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park Master Plan: The preplanning has begun and consultant selection process will start in the spring of 2006 in order for the consultant to begin work at the start of the new fiscal year. A scoping meeting with the park supervisors and west side trail planner was conducted before a questionnaire requesting job and project experience was sent to consultants.

Visitor Centers: On April 26, 2006, three architectural firms will be interviewed.

Coming and Going in Human Resources

A new Grant Coordinator, Melanie Brown, was hired at Park Headquarters. Debbie Lemon was hired as the new Administrative Coordinator at Headquarters.

Recruiting is currently underway for:

- Assistant Director (Headquarters)
- Contact Station Assistant (2 temporary and 1 Full-time) at Lake Pleasant
- Event Coordinator (Lake Pleasant)
- Park Maintenance Worker (Lake Pleasant)
- Public Information Officer (Headquarters)
- Trail Technician (Trails Crew)
- Park Supervisor (Estrella)
- Park Office Clerk (White Tank)

Interviews will soon be conducted for Park Clerk and Park Maintenance Worker at McDowell.